The Only Way to *Calm* THE CRAZINESS of Christmas

by Cory McKenna

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A Christmas Confession…

Confession time! Christmas used to drive me absolutely crazy. There, I said it!

Every year my regenerate heart would wage all-out war on the “carnal consumerism” and “demonic distractions” within a chaotic world seemingly determined to destroy the real Reason for the season. Sadly, not only did my sinful “Bah Humbug!” attitude deem me unapproachable as a witness, but unappreciative as a worshipper too!

By God’s grace my heart has since changed. He met me many years ago after I had confessed my sin and opened my Bible to ask Him why most in our culture have no concern for Who the Christ of Christmas really is? The answer is the only way to calm the craziness of Christmas for you … and for them.

Only Revelation Brings Relaxation!

Luke 2 tells us that times haven’t changed much since the first Christmas. The story starts with a young couple giving birth to the Savior of the world – in an animal’s feeding trough of all places! Why? Because “… there was no place for them in the inn.” (v. 7)

Do you ever wonder what was wrong with this now infamous innkeeper? After all, we can always find a special place for special people, can't we? Well, that's precisely the point! Jesus was no one "special" to him, so he was just blindly taking care of business like the rest of the world.

Truthfully, the only difference between those who made room for the Christ of Christmas and those who didn't was that they received a revelation from God to relax and rejoice in His arrival. He was and is the Only Way to calm the craziness of Christmas!

As we humble our hearts again before our Savior and sincerely thank Him for His saving grace, here are 3 helpful hints from Scripture that are sure to calm the craziness of Christmas this year:

1 Receive afresh God's good news of great joy!

While Bethlehem was hustling and bustling with crowds of busy and distracted people (sound familiar?), the shepherds were wisely chillaxing in the fields ... where it was likely quiet! It was there where the angel broke the silence and said: "Fear not, for behold, I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord." (vv. 10-11)

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ! Let's all covenant together this holiday season to wisely break away from the hustle and bustle of our busy world to get alone with God. Let's leave the shopping malls, turn off the TV, lose the smart phone, and contend for the quiet time we need to receive afresh His good news of great joy that the Christ of Christmas has reconciled you to your Heavenly Father for all eternity!

2 Praise God for sending His Son!

After the angel makes the initial announcement, thousands more praise God and proclaim in heavenly accord: "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among those with whom he is pleased." (v. 14) Here we learn that the only appropriate response to witnessing God's power and glory is giving Him the highest and most heavenly praise possible!

Can you remember the last Christmas when you actually let your heart and mind wander in praise and worship of God for the miracle of Christ's birth?

Consider Charles Spurgeon's sermon from September 19th, 1858 on the wonder of Christ's coming:
"Infinite, and an infant; eternal, and yet born of a woman; Almighty, and yet hanging on a woman's breast; supporting the universe, and yet needing to be carried in a mother's arms; king of angels, and yet

the reputed son of Joseph; heir of all things and yet the carpenter's despised son."

The incarnation is such a powerful paradox! Let's again praise God for sending His only Son to: become our curse, bear our wrath, die in our place, and rise from the dead on our behalf so that through faith in Him we can stand uncondemned before our Creator!

3 Treasure Jesus in your heart!

In Luke 2:19, we read: "But Mary treasured up all these things, pondering them in her heart." It was Augustine who said of Jesus: "He was created of a mother whom He created. He was carried by hands that He formed." I can only imagine how giving birth to her own Creator motivated Mary to worship and wonder at the arrival of her heavenly baby boy!

Amidst all the earthly "treasures" underneath the tree, perhaps nothing calms the craziness of Christmas like keeping Jesus as our greatest eternal treasure! This principle so deeply impacted me personally that several years ago it moved me to write this McKenna Family Mission Statement which hangs on our wall: To love the Lord our God with all of our heart, soul, mind, and strength; to love others as He loves us; and to thankfully and passionately glorify Him in every

thought, affection, word, and action while always enjoying Jesus as our greatest pleasure and most precious treasure.

I encourage you to make it your personal mission this Christmas to treasure Jesus in your heart and invite the others in your life to do the same!

Worship Inspires Witness!

Scripture says that: "... the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them." (v. 20) This is one of the many reasons why a personal training principle of The Cross Current is that "worship inspires witness."

It's been my experience that Christmas can be a wonderful time of the year for worship and witness! Why? Because despite attempts by the unbelieving world to subtract the Savior as the real Reason for the season, the holiday title still contains His Name and celebrates His birth too!

Further, though this crazy world is still hopelessly lost in sin and darkness, the Light of the world has come and can still calm the craziness of Christmas and bring everlasting peace and joy to all who receive Him.

THE CROSS CURRENT

THE CROSS CURRENT (TCC) is a local missions ministry that equips the Church by example to **normalize sharing the gospel** in all your personal and community relationships.

Cory McKenna is Founding President of The Cross Current. Having served as a pastor since 2002 and an equipping evangelist since 2007, the Lord has graciously grown in Cory a love for His people and gifting necessary to equip them for the work of Gospel outreach together. Cory and his wife Dawn live in London, Ontario with their two sons, Joshua and Caleb.

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